

Message Text

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ACTION SCS-06

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 ISO-00 HA-05 H-02 L-03 SSO-00 /031 W

-----006781 232238Z /75

O 232225Z DEC 77

FM AMCONSUL MARACAIBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 315

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

UNCLAS MARACAIBO 0092

EO 11652 NA

TAGS: CGEN

SUBJ: TUGBOAT -TAMMY W"

1. CAPTAIN RALPH LIPPS, MAST OF THE US FLAG TUGBOAT "TAMMY W" CALLED THE CONSULATE AFTERNOON OF DEC 23. HE SAID THAT HIS VESSEL WAS BERTHED AT PUNTO FIJO FALCON STATE IN WESTERN VENEZUELA. LIPPS SAID THAT THE CREW HAS NOT BEEN PAID SINCE NOV 27, THAT OTHER THAN SOME CANNED FOOD ON BOARD HE HAS NO FUNDS TO PURCHASE ANY FOOD, AND THAT ONE OF THE CREW IS SICK.

2. THE "TANNY W" IS OWNED BY MARINE EXPLORATION, IN C OF MIAMI FLORDIA, TEL 3056350751. A HENRY SUAREZ HAS BEEN SIGNING THE TELEXES ADDRESSED TO THE SHIP. THE VESSEL LEFT MIAMI ON NOV 21, BOUND DIRECT FOR PUNTO FIJO. HOWEVER, BAD WEATHER FORCED THE TAMMY W INTO PORT AU PRINCE UNDER NOT OF PROTEST ON DEC 8. SHE CLEARED PORT AU PRINCE FOR PUNTO FIJO ON DEC 9.

3. THE CHIEF MATE, JOHN G GANANN, COMPLAINS OF INTERNAL BLEEDING. HW WANT TO RETURN TO THE US AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. LIPPS TOLD THE CONSULATE, HOWEVER, THAT MARINE EXPLORATION HAD REFUSED TO PAY AIR PASSAGES FOR ANY CREW MEMBERS. IN ANY CASE RESERVATIONS INTO OR OUT OF VENEZUELA AT THIS TIME OF YEAR ARE ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO OBTAIN. THE EARLIEST
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RESERVATIONS AVAILABLE ARE FOR TUESDAY, THE 27TH, AND THESE ARE NOT YET CONFIRMED. BECAUSE THE VESSEL HAS NO MONEY TO PAY FOR THE TICKETS, GANANN SUGGESTED THAT HIS WIFE CULD SENDH HIM FUNDS. SHE IS:

WILLA MAY GANANN

9250 ORME ROAD

JACKSONVILLE, FLA

9047814670

GANANN SAID THAT HE PREFERRED TO RETURN ASAP TO SEE HIS
PHYSICIAN IN THE US HE SAID THAT HE HAD OPEN HEART
SURGERY LAST FEB. HE DECLINED TO COME TO MARACAIBO
WHERE WE COULD HAVE HIM ADMITTED TO A HOSPITAL.

4. THERE ARE SIX CREW MEMBERS, FOUR AMERICANS, ONE BRITISH
NATINAL US RESIDENT AND ONE HAITAIN NATINAL US
RESIDENT.

5. FURTHER COMPLICATING THE MATTER, LIPPS TOLD US THAT
MARINE EXPLORATION OWED MONEY TO "EVERYBODY IN VENEZUELA".
HE BELIEVES THAT A LIEN MAY BE PLACED AGAINST HIS VESSEL.
LIPPS ALSO CLAIMED THAT SUAREZ HAD REFUSED TO AUTHORIZE ANY
FUNDS FOR THE TUG. WE WERE UNABLE TO TALK TO THE PRINCIPAL
OF THE SHIPPING AGENCY HANDLING THE TUG, BUT THE RELUCTANCE
OF OFFICE PERSONNEL TO DISCUSS THE POSSIBILITY OF A LEIN
SEEMED TO CONFIRM LIPPS' STATEMENT THE AGENCY IS:
REIVEN PUNTO FIJO FALCON VENEZUELA
TELEX 54120
TEL 0692664)

6. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT DEPT CONTACT MRS GANANN
AND ASK HER TO BYY A TICKET PUNTO FIFO CARACAS MIAMI
JACKSONVILLE FOR HER HUSBAND THRU PANAM ONCE AND IF
THE TICKET IS PURCHASED REQUEST THE DEPT CONFIRM
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THISTO THE CONSULATE BY IMMEDIATE CABLE THEN WE CAN
GUARANTEE PAYMENT TO THE AGNCY. FURTHER WE REQUEST THAT
THE DEPT DO WHAT IT CAN TO HAVE MARINE EXPLORATION
FULFILL ITS OBLIGATIONS TO ITS VESSEL AND CREW FROM ALL
APPEARNNCES THE TAMMY W IS ABOUT TO BECOME INVOLVED
IN A FIRST CLASS LEAGAL ENTANGLEMENT IF VENEZUELAN AUTHORITIES
ARREST THE TUG, THE RESOLUTION OF THIS PROBLEM COULD EASILY
BE VERY COMPLICATED AND EQUALLY DRAWN OUT.AACTION NOW MIGHT
WELL SVE ALL CONVCERNED FROM A MULTITUDE OF PROBLEMS. WE
WOULD APPRECIATE THE DEPT GUIDANCE

7. FYI THE PRINCIPAL OFFICERS HOME PHONE IN MARACIABO
IS 515948
CRISCOLL

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NNN

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